

SELECT
ICELANDIC POETRY,

TRANSLATED

FROM THE ORIGINALS;

WITH NOTES.

PART SECOND.

———Opifex numeris veterum primordia vocum
Atque marem strepitum fidis intendisse,

PERSIUS.

London:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER-ROW;

BY I. GOLD, SHOE-LANE.

1806.

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Alþing máttu stjórna þessu á milli.
Óþing máttu stjórna þessu á milli.
Tessu.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,

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1807.

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SKIRNER'S EXPEDITION.

From the old Icelandic in Sæmund's Edda.

1805.

FREYR, son of Niorder, dwelt in Hlidskialf, and discerned the whole world. He looked towards Jotunheim*, and there he saw a beautiful virgin, going to bower from the hall of her father. Hence was his mind grievously affected. His attendant† was named Skirner. Niorder bade him ask for a conference with Freyr. Then Scada‡ sung.

“ Skirner, arise ! and swiftly run,

Where lonely sits our pensive son !

Bid him to parley, and enquire,

Gainst whom he teems with sullen ire.”

* For an account of Jotunheim, the Jotuns, Thursi, Vani, Alti, and Asi, see part 1st, notes on the Song of Thrym.

† *Scorveinn*, literally shoe-swain.

‡ Scada was the wife of Niorder.

SKIRNER sung.

“ Ill words, I fear, my lot will prove, 5
 If I thy son attempt to move ;
 If I bid parley, and enquire,
 Why teems his soul with savage ire.”

SKIRNER sung.

“ Prince of the Gods and first in fight,
 Speak, honor'd Freyr, and tell me right! 10
 Why spends my Lord the tedious day
 In his lone hall to grief a prey ?”

FREYR sung.

“ O how shall I, fond youth, disclose
 To thee my bosom's heavy woes ?
 The ruddy God shines every day, 15
 But dull to me his cheerful ray.”

SKIRNER sung.

“ Thy sorrows deem not I so great,
 That thou the tale shouldst not relate.
 Together sported we in youth,
 And well may trust each other's truth.” 20

FREYR sung.

“ In Gymer’s court I saw her move,
The maid, who fires my breast with love.
Her snow-white arms and bosom fair
Shone lovely, kindling sea and air.
Dear is she to my wishes more, 25
Than ere was maid to youth before:
But *Gods and Elfs, I wot it well,
Forbid, that we together dwell.”

SKIRNER sung.

“ Give me that horse of wonderous breed
To cross the nightly flame† with speed; 30
And that self-brandish’d sword to smite
The giant race with strange affright.”

FREYR sung.

“ To thee I give this wonderous steed
To pass the watchful fire with speed;

* Asi and Alfi.

† The bower of Gerda was surrounded with fire, like that of Brynhilda, whose history is related at length in the notes.

And this, which borne by valiant wight 35
Self-brandish'd will his foemen smite."

SKIRNER addressed his horse.

"Dark night is spread; 'tis time, I trow,
To climb the mountains hoar with snow.
Both shall return, or both remain
In durance by the giant ta'en." 40

Skirner rode into Jofunheim to the court of Gymer:
furious dogs were tied there before the door of the
wooden enclosure, which surrounded Gerda's bower.
He rode towards a shepherd, who was sitting on a
mound, and addressed him:

"Shepherd, who sittest on the mound,
And turn'st thy watchful eyes around,
How may I lull these bloodhounds, say!
How speak unharm'd with Gymer's may*!"

THE SHEPHERD sung

"Whence, and what art thou? doom'd to die, 45
Or dead revisitest the sky?"

* May, maid.

For ride by night, or ride by day,
Thou ne'er shalt come to Gymer's may."

SKIRNER sung.

"I grieve not, I; a better part
Fits him, who boasts a ready heart. 50

At hour of birth our lives were shaped;
The doom of Fate can ne'er be scaped."

GERDA sung.

"What sounds unknown mine ears invade,
Frighting this mansion's peaceful shade?
The earth's foundation rocks withal, 55
And trembling shakes all Gymer's hall."

THE ATTENDANT sung.

"Dismounted stands a warrior sheen;
His courser crops the herbage green."

GERDA sung.

"Haste, bid him to my bower with speed,
To quaff unmix'd the pleasant mead: 60
And good betide us!* for I fear

My brother's murderer is near.—

* The duties of hospitality were held so sacred amongst the nor-

What art thou? Elf, or Asian son?
 Or from the wiser Vanians sprung?
 Alone to visit our abode
 O'er bickering flames why hast thou rode?" 65

SKIRNER sung.

"Nor Elf am I, nor Asian son;
 Nor from the wiser Vanians sprung:
 Yet o'er the bickering flames I rode
 Alone to visit your abode. 70
 Eleven apples here I hold,
 Gerda, for thee, of purest gold;
 Let this fair gift thy bosom move
 To grant young Freyr thy precious love."

GERDA sung.

"Eleven apples take not I 75
 From man, as price of chastity!
 While life remains, no tongue shall tell,
 That Freyr and I together dwell."

thern nations, that Gerda would not refuse admittance to Skirner, though she imagined him to be her greatest enemy.

SKIRNER sung.

“ Gerda, for thee this wonderous ring
Burnt on young Balder’s pile I bring ; 80
On each ninth night shall other eight
Drop from it, all of equal weight.”

GERDA sung.

“ I take not, I, that wonderous ring,
Though it from Balder’s pile you bring.
Gold lack not I in Gymer’s bower ; 85
Enough for me my father’s dower.”

SKIRNER sung.

“ Behold this bright and slender brand
Unsheath’d and glittering in my hand ;
Deny not, maiden ! lest thine head
Be sever’d by the trenchant blade.” 90

GERDA sung.

“ Gerda will ne’er by force be led
To grace a conqueror’s hateful bed :
But this, I trow, with main and might
Gymer shall meet thy boast in fight.”

SKIRNER *sung.*

" Behold this bright and slender brand 95
 Unsheathe'd, and glittering in my hand !
 Slain by its edge thy sire shall lie ;
 That giant old is doom'd to die. 100
 E'en as I list, the magic wand
 Shall tame thee ! Lo, with charmed hand 100
 I touch thee, Maid ! There shalt thou go,
 Where never man shall learn thy woe.
 On some high pointed rock forlorn
 Like eagle* shalt thou sit at morn ;
 Turn from the world's all-cheering light, 105
 And seek the deep abyss of night :
 Food shall to thee more loathly shew,
 Than slimy †serpent creeping slow.
 When forth thou com'st, a hideous sight,
 Each wondering eye shall stare with fright. 110

* Eagles are said to sit without moving for a long time upon some high eminence in the morning.

† Perhaps alluding to the serpent of Midgard in the Icelandic Mythology.

By all observ'd, yet sad and lone ;
 'Mongst shivering *Thursians wider known,
 Than him, who sits unmov'd on high
 The †Guard of heaven with sleepless eye.
 Mid charms, and chains, and restless woe, 115
 Thy tears with double grief shall flow.
 Now seat thee, Maid, while I declare
 Thy tide of sorrow and despair.
 Thy bower shall be some Giant's cell,
 Where phantoms pale shall with thee dwell. 120
 Each day to the cold Thursian's hall
 Comfortless, wretched, shalt thou crawl ;
 Instead of joy and pleasure gay
 Sorrow and tears and sad dismay ;
 With some three-headed Thursian wed, 125
 Or pine upon a lonely bed.
 From morn till morn love's secret fire
 Shall gnaw thine heart with vain desire ;

* *Hrim-thursar*. *Hrim* (Anglicè *rime*) was spoken with a guttural aspiration; and probably *Crim-tartary*, the former seat of the Asi, was so called from its cold.

† *Heimdallar*. See part 1st, p. 28.

Like barren root of thistle pent
 In some high ruin'd battlement. 130
 O'er shady hill, through greenwood round,
 I sought this wand ; the wand I found.
 Odin is wroth, and mighty Thor ;
 E'en Freyr shall now thy name abhor.
 But ere o'er thine ill-fated head 135
 The last dread curse of Heaven be spread,
 Giants and Thursians far and near,
 Suttungur's *sons, and Asians, hear,

* Suttungur, the son of Gilling, was a giant, and possessed the liquor of poetry, which he had gained from the Dwarfs. It is related in the Edda, (*Resenius's edition*, c. 60, &c.) that the Asi and Vani, having been long at war, made peace, and spit into a vase. From this the Gods formed Kuaser, a person of exceeding learning ; and the Dwarfs mixed his blood with honey, and so made the liquor of poetry. The Vani were a Grecian colony, and this fable seems to imply, that both the learning and the poetry of the North was partly of Greek origin. Odin, under the feigned name of Bolverk, entered into the service of Bauge, brother of Suttungur, and drank up the liquor. A small quantity of it, which he spilt, was scattered amongst men. It is observable, that the name of *Suttungur*, from whom Odin gained this liquor, may denote, that he derived his poetry from the *Southern tongues*.

How I forbid with fatal ban

'This maid the joys, the fruit, of man ! 140

Cold Grimmer is that giant hight,

Who thee shall hold in realms of night ;

Where slaves in cups of twisted roots

Shall bring foul beverage from the goats :

Nor sweeter draught, nor blither fare, 145

Shalt thou, sad Virgin, ever share.

'Tis done ! I wind the mystic charm ;

Thus, thus, I trace the giant form ;

And three fell characters below,

Fury, and Lust, and restless Woe. 150

E'en as I wound, I strait unwind

This fatal spell, if thou art kind."

GERDA sung.

" Now hail, now hail, thou warrior bold !

Take, take this cup of crystal cold,

And quaff the pure metheglin old !

Yet deem'd I ne'er, that love could bind

To Vanian youth my hostile mind."

} 155

SKIRNER sung.

“ I turn not home to bower or hall,
Till I have learnt mine errand all ;
Where thou wilt yield the night of joy 169
To brave Niorder’s gallant boy.”

GERDA sung.

“ Barri is hight the seat of love ;
Nine nights elaps’d, in that known grove
Shall brave Niorder’s gallant boy
From Gerda take the kiss of joy.” 165

Then rode Skirner home. Freyr stood forth and
hailed him, and asked, what tidings.

“ Speak, Skirner, speak, and tell with speed !
Take not the harness from thy steed,
Nor stir thy foot, till thou hast said,
How fares my love with Gymer’s maid !”

SKIRNER sung.

“ Barri is hight the seat of love ; 170
Nine nights elaps’d, in that known grove

To brave Niorder's gallant boy
Will Gerda yield the kiss of joy."

FREYR sung.

"Long is one night, and longer twain;

But how for three endure my pain!

175

A month of rapture sooner flies,

Than half one night of wishful sighs."

BRYNHILDA'S RIDE TO HELL*.

From the old Icelandic in Semund's Edda, M. S.

1805.

AFTER the death of Brynhilda two funeral piles were constructed; one for Sigurd, and that was burnt first; but Brynhilda was burnt on the other, and she was borne on a vehicle tented with precious cloth. It is said, that Brynhilda went in this vehicle along the road to Hell, and passed by a habitation, where dwelt a certain giantess. The giantess sung.

“ Hence avaunt! nor dare invade
This pillar'd mansion's rocky shade!
Better at home thy needle ply,
Than thus our secret dwelling spy;

* Helveg, the road to Hell; or perhaps it only means *the funereal road*. I have subjoined an account of the history of Brynhilda, without which the verses will not be easily understood.

O faithless head of Valland's race, 5

Darest thou approach this charmed place?

Many a wolf, that howl'd for food,

Thou didst sate with human blood!"

BRYNHILDA sung.

"Maid of the rock, upbraid not me,

Though pirate-like I plough'd the sea! 10

Those, who kenn'd my early merit,

Shall ever praise my lofty spirit."

GIANTESS sung.

"I know thee well, ili-fated dame!

Thy sire was Budla, Brynhilda thy name!

Thou didst Giuka's race destroy, 15

And turn to plaint his kingdom's joy!"

BRYNHILDA sung.

"Hateful head, if thou wouldst know,

I will tell my tale of woe;

V. 5. "Valland; Gallia occidentalis et maritima plerumque hœc significatur in historiis Arctoïis," *M. S. Lex.*—"Vallir; Galli, ejusque regionis incolæ," *Ib.*

How the heirs of Giuka's realm
 Did my perjured love o'erwhelm. 20
 Beneath an oak by mournful spell
 The angry monarch garr'd me dwell.
 Twelve years I counted and no more,
 When faith to Sigurd young I swore.
 Mongst Hlyndale's warriors was I hight 25
 Hilda clad in helmet bright.
 Helmgunnar old this arm did fell;
 This falchion sent his soul to hell :
 Glory I gave Audbrodur young ;
 But Odin's wrath wax'd fierce and strong. 30
 His powerful wand my senses bound,
 And burnish'd shields were piled around ;
 And he should break my sleep alone,
 Who ne'er the breath of fear had known.
 Wide around my strange abode 35
 With blazing fire the forest glow'd ;

V. 22. *Monarch.* Odin, or perhaps her father Budla.

V. 23. This alludes to her first interview with Sigurd.

And none might pass, though wise and bold,
 Save who should bring stern Fofner's gold.
 The generous lord stout Grana bore,
 Whose might had won that precious store. 40
 My foster-father bade me wed
 The stranger to my lonely bed ;
 And seem'd that youth alone more bold,
 Than all the chiefs, that Denmark told.
 Darkling we slept from eve till morn, 45
 As he had been my brother born ;
 Eight nights the peaceful couch we shared,
 Nor hand was stirr'd, nor touch was dared.
 Yet hence did proud Gudruna say,
 In Sigurd's arms Brynhilda lay : 50
 This well I wot, Brynhilda ne'er
 Would brook their foul disloyal snare.
 Women and men were born in strife
 To spend the anxious hours of life ;

V. 39. Grana was the horse of Sigurd.

Now, join'd by death's all-healing pow'r, 55

Sigurd and I shall part no more.—

Giantess, avaunt !”

“ *After this (says Norna Gest's Saga) the giantess howled frightfully,
and rushed into the caverns of the mountain.*”

NOTES
ON
BRYNHILDA'S RIDE TO HELL.

THESE verses are imperfectly quoted from the Edda in Norna Gest's Saga ; c. 8. where v. 25 and 26 are omitted.

Heto mic allir i Hlyndaulom

Hildir undir hialmi, hverr er kunni.

The MS. in the museum varies also in several lines, some of which are evidently corrupt : for instance, instead of *Fafnisdynu*, the pillow of *Fofner*, the MS. gives *Gull tha er und Fafni la*, the gold that lay under *Fofner* ; which is clearly an explanation, that has crept into the text.

The verses in Norna Gest's Saga are prefaced by the following introduction.—“ When Brynhilda was carried out to be burnt, she was borne near some rocks.

A giantess dwelt there ; her complexion was swarthy, and she was standing in a skin garment before the entrance of a cave. In her hand she held a long wand, and she said ; *This will I add to thy pile, Brynhilda ; and it had been better, thou hadst been burnt alive for thy foul deeds, who didst let slay Sigurd Fafnisbana, a man so illustrious. Often was I propitious to him, and therefore will I sing vengeful words against thee, that thou mayst become more hateful to all, who shall hear what is said of thee.* After that Brynhilda and the giantess began to utter incantations against each other."

The tragic history of Sigurd and Brynhilda (properly Brynhildr) is told at length in the unpublished part of Sæmund's Edda, and in Volsunga Saga ; from which I have abridged an account, which will be sufficient to make these stanzas intelligible.

Sigurd, son of Hiordys and king of Sigmund, was educated, according to the old Northern custom, by his foster-father, whose name was Reigin. The father of Reigin had possessed a ring and a wondrous store of

gold, which Odin had taken from the dwarf Andvare, who had foretold that it would prove the bane of all, who should acquire it. Fofner, the brother of Reigin, slew his father, and took possession of all that treasure. It is said in Volsunga Saga, that "after that he became so savage, that he kept aloof, and suffered none but himself to enjoy his wealth; and that he became at last the worst of serpents, and lay upon the treasure." Much has been said, and many ingenious suggestions have been advanced, concerning the dragons of fabulous history, who watched over treasures and imprisoned damsels. It appears in Volsunga Saga, that it was a figurative expression; for Reigin says therein to Sigurd, speaking of his brother Fofner, "*Thad er ecke voxstur epter hætte lingorma, og er giort af miklu meirra en er,*" i. e. "He is not actually shaped after the fashion of a snake, and much more hath been made of this, than is true." Sigurd bore the device of a serpent upon his shield, after he had slain this Fofner; to which he was excited by Reigin, who had been defrauded of his share

in his father's treasure. After the performance of this feat, which procured him the surname of Fafnisbana, he slew Reigin also, who had incurred his suspicion, and took possession of all Fofner's gold. Then stretching southward towards the French frontier, he arrived at the mountain called Hindarfiall; and there he beheld a great light, as of flaming fire, which blazed even to the heavens: and when he reached it, he saw a fortification of shields, and above a standard; and a warrior lay within in complete armour. First he took off the helmet; and saw, that it was a woman, clothed in a coat of mail, that adhered even to her skin. Sigurd rent the mail from head to foot, as if it had been a garment; and said that she had slept long enough. "Who is this," (replied she) "of might sufficient to rend my armour, and to break my sleep? Art thou Sigurd Sigmundsson, and bearest the helmet of Fofner, and the sword which slew him?" Sigurd replied, "I am of the race of Volsung; and this have I done, for that I heard thou wert a rich princess, excelling in beauty and in wisdom,

and that would I certify." Brynhilda answered, "Two kings contended, one hight Hialmgunnar, and he was old, but of mickle might, and Odin had promised him the victory ; the other was Agnar or Audbrother : and I fell d Hialmgunnar in fight ; but Odin struck my head with the sleepy-thorn, and said I should never be again victorious, and should be hereafter wedded ; but I vowed strongly against him, never to be wedded to any man, who could fear." After this Brynhilda, who was deeply skilled in incantations, conversed with Sigurd on mystic and moral lore, and displayed great wisdom : and Sigurd said, " No wiser woman have I beheld, and thee I swear to marry, even if I might chuse amongst all mankind ;" and they both pledged their faith. Then Sigurd rode away ; his shield was manyfold, and burnished with ruddy gold ; a dragon was graven on it, dark brown above, and of brilliant red below ; and even so was his helmet, and saddle ; and furniture. His breastplate was golden, and all his armour studded with gold. He is said to

have excelled all men in courtesy and valor, in symmetry of stature, in active exercises, in eloquence and wisdom : therefore, saith Volsunga Saga, his name is celebrated in every language north of the Grecian sea, and so it will be, as long as the world shall last. Sigurd rode, till he arrived at a large town, where lived a prince named Heimer, who was married to the sister of Brynhilda. There was he cordially received by them and their son Alsvdur, and deposited all his treasure. Meanwhile Brynhilda had returned to the court of Heimer, and dwelt apart amongst her virgins, excelling all women in works of art. She broidered in gold the mighty deeds of Sigurd, the slaughter of the serpent, the rape of his treasure, and the death of Reigin. It chanced one day, that Sigurd rode into the forest with hound and hawk, and much attendance ; and, ere he returned, his hawk flew up to a tower, and perched in a small window. Sigurd pursued his bird, and entered the abode of Brynhilda, where he beheld a maid of exceeding beauty, and much was he smitten with her per-

son and her handywork. And when Sigurd came to hall, he would converse with no man ; and Alsvdur questioned him courteously touching his sadness ; and Sigurd answered, " Good my friends, hear, why I am thoughtful. My hawk flew into a tower ; and, as I would take him, I beheld a lovely woman ; and she was broidering with gold the feats, which I have performed." Alsvdur replied, " Thou sawest Brynhilda, the daughter of Budla ; and she is famous in war : but take not thou thought of her, for no man would she ever suffer near her, nor pour out the wine for any one." Sigurd said, that he preferred her to all women, and that he should try, whether she would deny him. The next day went Sigurd to Brynhilda, and she received him in a rich apartment ; it was hung with the costliest cloths, and the floor was carpeted ; and she held a golden cup, and bade him drink. Sigurd took her by the hand, and seated her by his side and kissed her, saying, " No woman was ever born so lovely ; and that will be the best of days, when we shall be

united." Brynhilda replied, that she was destined to pass her life in warfare, and that he must espouse Gudruna, the daughter of Giuka. But Sigurd swore by the Gods, that he would marry her or no one : and she pledged herself likewise unto Sigurd ; and he gave her the golden ring of Andvare. And it came to pass, that Sigurd went to the court of Giuka, bearing with him all his wealth ; and the wife of Giuka thought to divert his love from Brynhilda, that he might espouse her daughter : and she gave him a charmed draft, which when he had drunk, he forgot Brynhilda ; and he abided there and married Gudruna, and her brothers Gunnar and Hogni were his companions in arms.

The fame of Brynhilda's beauty had long reached the court of Giuka, and Gunnar resolved to win her ; and he prayed Sigurd and Hogni to accompany him on his journey. They first visited king Budla, and then proceeded to Hlyndale, where the damsel dwelt.—Heimer received them well, and told them, that she would marry him, who could ride through the flaming fire,

that burned round her habitation. They beheld her tower shine with gold, and the furnace blazed all about it. Gunnar forced his steed towards the fire, but it started back ; and he requested Sigurd to lend him his horse Grana, but Grana would not stir with his new rider. Then Gunnar and Sigurd changed steeds again. Sigurd held the sword, which had slain Fofner, and bound on his golden spurs ; and when Grana knew the spur, he rushed into the flames ; and a loud sound arose, and the fire raged more fiercely : as it is told in the poetry of the Edda, “ *The earth gan shake, and the furnace bickered high towards heaven ; few would have dared those royal deeds, to ride through or to spring over the flames. Sigurd smote Grana with his sword ; the furnace slackened before the king ; all the flames were laid before him, who sought renown. He rode with the gold*, which Reigin had possessed.*”—

* * Gold ; in the Icelandic, *blik*. Biörner, in Volsunga Saga, translates it, *the horse*, which does not accord with the story ; and I do not imagine, that the word can bear that signification. It means *splendor*, and is poetically used for *gold*. In the MS. Lexicon, in

And when Sigurd had passed the furnace, he found a splendid mansion, and there sat Brynhilda. She asked what man it was, and he named himself Gunnar Giukason, and said; "Thou art my bride with thy sire's consent; for that I have rode through the fire, as thou with thy fosterfather Heimer hast conditioned." Brynhilda answered mournfully from her seat, as a swan on the salt-lake; the sword was in her hand, the helmet upon her head, and she was clothed in mail. Three nights he dwelt there, and they rested in one bed, but he placed his sword Gram between them. He took from her hand the ring of Andvare, and gave her another in its stead. Then went Brynhilda to Heimer, and told him what had befallen her; and he said; "So must it be; the condition shall be fulfilled." Sigurd and the brothers returned to the court of Giuka; and after went king Budla, and his daughter, and his son

the Museum, I find, "*Blik, nitor; in Eddá pro auro;*" which I believe alludes to this passage, for the word does not occur in the part, which is published.

Atla with a mighty retinue ; and the nuptials were held with high solemnity. And when some days had passed, Sigurd recollected his oath to Brynhilda, but he held his peace : and Gunnar and Brynhilda dwelt together with good sport and banqueting.

It chanced one day, that Gudruna and Brynhilda went forth to bathe in the waters of the Rhine ; and Brynhilda went into the deeper water, saying ; “ I will in nothing be equalled by thee ; for my father was more powerful than thine, and my husband hath performed greater feats, and he rode through the burning fire, but thine was the servant of king *Hialfrec.”— Gudruna answered wrathfully, “ It savours not of wisdom to upbraid my husband, who is renowned as the first of men : and ill doth it become thee, since he lay with thee before thy husband ; ’twas he slew Fofner, and rode through the flames, when thou didst think it

* Hialfrec married the mother of Sigurd, after his father's death.

had been Gunnar : and he slept with thee, and took the ring of Andvare, and here mayst thou behold it." Brynhilda saw the ring and knew it, and the paleness of death came over her ; she returned home, and spake not a word during the evening. And Brynhilda fell sick, and kept her bed ; which, when Gunnar heard, he went to her, and questioned her : but she answered him not, and lay as if she were dead. When he urged her more, she said ; " What hast thou done with the ring, I gave thee, which I received from my father Budla at our last parting, when thou didst come to him with king Giuka, and threaten fire and desolation, if ye obtained not me ? After that he conversed with me, and asked which amongst ye I would chuse ; but I offered to defend the country, and to lead a third of the army to battle. Two alternatives were proposed to me ; to marry according to his will, or to lose his inheritance and friendship ; and he said, that his friendship would be better than his wrath. I considered, that I was too weak to resist, and I engaged to marry him, who

should ride the horse Grana with the gold of Fofner, and pass through the blazing fire, and slay those whom I named. Now did none, save Sigurd, dare to ride through the furnace ; for he lacked not courage : he killed the serpent, and Reigin, and five other kings ; but thou, Gunnar, wert pale, as a corse ; and art neither king, nor warrior. And I vowed solemnly at home, to bestow my love on the most excellent alone, and that was Sigurd ; now am I perjured, and therefore will I contrive his death.”—Gunnar reproached her with the murder of those, she had killed in battle ; and she attempted to slay him, but Hogni prevented her : and after that she remained some days without food, and spoke to nobody. Then Sigurd went to Brynhilda, and said ; “ Awake, Brynhilda ; the sun shines throughout the whole city, and thou hast slept enough. Cast aside thy sorrow, and be joyful.”—“ How darest thou” (replied Brynhilda) “ visit me, since no man hath acted towards me more treacherously ?”—“ If thou deemest me hostile,” (said Sigurd) “ thy reason errs ; the

husband of thy choice is thine.”—“No,” (answered she) “Gunnar rode not through the fire, and paid not to me the dower of slaughtered chiefs. I wondered at the man, who entered my apartment, and I thought that I recognised thine eyes ; but I could not distinguish with certainty, on account of the covering, in which I was enveloped for my misfortune. But thou didst overthrow the serpent, and ride through the furnace, and not the son of Giuka ; nor hath my soul ever smiled to Gunnar, but he hath been always hateful to me, though I concealed my disgust. Sigurd, I well remember the oaths, which we swore at Hindarfiall, but they are broken ; and sooner would I perish now, than violate my faith to Gunnar. I chuse not two husbands in one abode, and never shall I be at rest, till the sword be reddened with thy blood.”—When Sigurd had departed, Brynhilda excited Gunnar to slay him, together with his child ; protesting, that otherwise she would withdraw herself from his bed, and return to her own relations. And as she was the most beautiful of women,

and Gunnar loved her passionately, he excited his brother Guttormur to perform the execrable deed ; for as he and Hogni were the sworn companions of Sigurd, they dared not injure him. In the morning Guttormur entered the chamber of Sigurd, who was sleeping in the arms of Gudruna, and slew him ; but Sigurd, waking with the deadly wound, smote Guttormur with his sword, and they both perished. Then Brynhilda ordered a great funeral pile to be constructed ; and she placed herself on the pile with the dead bodies, and they were burnt together with five females and eight male slaves, whom her father had given her : for thus, she said, the obsequies of Sigurd would be fit and honorable.

V. 31. “ *I Skatalundi.*”—I can find no account of this word. Peringskiöld in Norn. G. Saga translates it “ *Ille mihi caput soporiferâ hastâ percussit.*” In the MS. Skatalundi appears to be two words.—*Lundr* is a grove.

V. 26. "*Hilda*."—"Brynhilddur for med hialm og *brinju*, og gieck ad vigum, og thvi var hun kollud Brynhilddur." i. e. "Brynhilda went with helmet and *coat of mail*, and sallied forth to war, and therefore was she called Bryn-hilda." *Volsunga Saga*, c. 32.

V. 47. "*Eight nights*." The prose account says three nights.

THE
DYING SONG
OF
REGNER LODBROCK.

Translated from the old Icelandic.

1804.

Regner Lodbrock was killed in 794, by vipers applied to a wound in his breast, having been taken prisoner by Ella, in Northumberland.—These lines are supposed to be spoken by Regner in the hour of death, and by many persons they are believed to have been really his composition; but probably the account is true, that they were written by the Scald Brage, after his death, at the request of his widow Aslauga. N. B. I have omitted eight stanzas, giving an account of various engagements, which, from their similarity, might be thought tedious.

1.

WE *smote with swords; nor long, before
In arms I reach'd the Gothic† shore,
To work the loathly serpent's death.
I slew the reptile of the heath;

* *Huggum vier*, we hewed.

† Gothland, in Sweden.

My prize was *Thora ; from that fight 5
 Mongst warriors am I Lodbrock hight.
 I pierced the monster's scaly side
 With steel, the soldier's wealth and pride.

2.

We smote with swords ; in early youth
 I fought by Eyra's† billowy mouth. 10
 Where high the echoing basnites rung
 To the hard javelin's iron tongue,
 The wolf and golden-footed‡ bird
 Glean'd plenteous harvest of the sword.
 Dark grew the ocean's swollen water ; 15
 The raven waded deep in slaughter.

3.

We smote with swords ; ere twenty years
 Were number'd, in the din of spears

* Thora was guarded by a serpent, which Regner slew, having protected himself against its poison, by fleecy brogues, whence he was called Lod-brock. He espoused Thora.

† The Sound.

‡ The eagle.

I rear'd my armed hand, and spread
 The tide of battle fierce and red. 20
 Eight earls my weighty arm subdued
 Eastward by Dwina's icy flood;
 There the gaunt falcon lack'd not food.
 The sweat of death distain'd the wave;
 The army tined* its warriors brave. 25

4.

We smote with swords; fierce Hedin's† queen
 Mid the hot storm of war was seen,
 When ‡Helsing's youths to Odin's hall
 We bade, and garr'd her prowess fall.
 Our vessels plough'd through Ifa's flood; 30
 The arrows stung; the stream was blood.
 Brands grated on the mail, and through
 Cleft shields the death-fraught lances flew.

* Tined, *lost*, Iccl. *tyndi*.

† Hilda, goddess of war.

‡ *Helsing*. Part of the coast of the gulph of Bothnia.

5.

We smote with swords ; none fled, I trow*,
 Ere on the masted galley's prow : : : : : 35
 Bold Herraud fell : no fairer earl
 Did e'er his bellying sail unfurl
 On winged †steeds, that spurn the main
 Cleaving the seafowl's lonely reign ;
 No lord in ‡stour more widely fear'd 40
 To distant port his vessel steer'd.
 That glorious chieftain's glowing heart
 In fight ay sought the foremost part.

6.

We smote with swords ; in fierce affray
 The warriors cast their shields away : : : : : 45
 By rifling steel with fury driven
 Many a fearless breast was riven ;

* *I trow* ; Icelandic, *Hygg ec*, I think.

† Ships.

‡ *Stour*, Icel. *styr*, war.

And, midst the din, from Skarpa's* rock
 Echo'd the falchion's sounding shock.
 The iron orbs with blood were dyed, 50
 Ere sunk king Rafen's youthful pride.
 Hot streaming from each valiant head
 Sweat on coats of mail was shed.

7.

We smote with swords ; near Inder's† shore
 A sumptuous meal the ravens tore ; 55
 Nor carnage lack'd to glut those ‡steeds,
 On which the sorceress Vala speeds.
 'Twas hard to 'scape unharm'd that day :
 When peer'd the sun's first dawning ray,
 Shafts saw I starting from the string ; 60
 The bent bow made the metal ring.

* *Skarpa* or *Skarfa skerium*. Probably Skarp-ey on the coast of Norway. From *sker*, a rock, and *skarpr*, sharp, or *skarfur*, sea-fowl.

† *Inder*. Probably an island near Trondhiem.

‡ Beasts of prey, on which the sorceresses were supposed to ride.

We smote with swords; loud clang'd the plain,
 Ere Ulla's* field saw Eysteinn slain.
 With gold adorn'd our conquering band
 Strode o'er the desolated land; 65
 And swift to meet each helmed head
 The pointed flames of arrows sped:
 Down many a neck the purple gore
 Trickled from the burning sore.

(St. 9, 10, 11, and 12, are omitted.)

We smote with swords; near Hadning's† bay 70
 (Hilda's‡ sport and Hilda's fray)
 Every noble warrior held
 High in air his charmed shield.
 Bucklers brast, and men were slain;
 Stoutest skulls were cleft in twain. 75

* *Ulla's*. The site of Upsala.

† *Hadning's bay*. Perhaps in the Orkneys.

‡ *Hilda*, goddess of war.

'Twas not, I trow, like wooing rest
On gentle maiden's snowy breast.

14.

We smote with swords; the iron sleet
Against the shields with fury beat.
On Northumbria's hostile shore 80
Heroes welter'd in their gore :
Our foes at early dawn of light
Fled not from the sport of fight,
Hilda's sport, where falchions keen
Bit the helmet's surface sheen. 85
'Twas not like kissing widow sweet
Reclining in the highest* seat.

(St. 15 and 16 are omitted.)

17.

We smote with swords ; at dawn of day
Hundred spearmen gasping lay,

* The old Northern houses consisted of one large habitable room, in which was an elevated stage for persons of rank, at the end opposite the door; like the dais or high table in our College Halls. This was called Aundveige.

Bent beneath the arrowy strife. 90

Egill rest my son of life ;

Too soon my Agnar's youth was spent,

The scabbard*-thorn his bosom rent :

The whiles each warrior's clashing steel

Contentious rung a dreadful peal 95

On the grey haubers, Hamder's† pride ;

And our bright standards glitter'd wide.

(St. 18th is omitted.)

19.

We smote with swords ; at morn I view'd

The ‡fair-hair'd prince by fate subdued ;

* Slider-thorn, i. e. sword.

† *Hamder*. An ancient warrior, who had been famous for his armour.

‡ Fair-haired, *Harfagrun*. Wormius says, that this means Harald Harfager. A more gross error was never committed by a learned antiquarian in the history of his own country ; for Harald Harfager, the founder of the Norwegian monarchy, whose reign forms an important æra in the history of that country, died peaceably in his bed, above a hundred years after the time of Regner. Bishop Percy, in his prose translation, has copied the mistake of Wormius.

Gay Aurn, (whose voice the widows loved, 100

Whose charms the blooming virgins moved)

Fainting, waning to his end.

In Ila's* sound that day he kenn'd

Other sport ; 'twas not, I ween,

Like quaffing from the goblet sheen 105

Fuming wine by maidens pour'd:

Yet, ere he fell, the battle roar'd,

The fulgent orbs in twain were cleft,

And lifeless many a kemp† was left.

(St. 20th is omitted.)

21.

We smote with swords ; the sounding blades, 110

Ruddy with gold, assail'd our heads.

In after times on ‡ Anglesey

Shall mortals trace the bloody fray,

Where Hilda's§ iron vesture rung,

Where kings march'd forth, and spears were flung. 115

* *Ila's sound.* Between Scotland and that island.

† *Kemp,* soldier.

‡ *Anglesey,* Aungols-ey.

§ *Hilda's vesture,* coats of mail.

Like winged dragons, red with gore
Our lances hiss'd along the shore.

22.

We smote with swords ; what fairer fate
Can e'er the sons of men await,
Than long amid the battle's blast 120
To front the storm, and fall at last ?
Who basely shuns the gallant strife
Nathless must lose his dastard life.
When waves of war conflicting roll,
'Tis hard to whet the coward soul 125
To deeds of worth ; the timid heart
Will never act a warrior's part.

23.

We smote with swords ; this deem I right,
Youth to youth in sturdy fight
Each his meeting falchion wield ; 130
Thane* to thane should never yield.

* Thane, Icelandic *Thengr*.

Such was ay the soldier's boast,
 Firm to face the adverse host.
 Boldest, who prize fair maidens' love,
 Must in the din of battle move. 135

24.

We smote with swords ; I hold, that all
 By destiny or live or fall :
 Each his certain hour awaits ;
 Few can 'scape the ruling Fates.
 When I scatter'd slaughter wide, 140
 And launch'd my vessels to the tide,
 I deem'd not, I, that Ella's blade
 Was doom'd at last to bow my head ;
 But hew'd in every Scottish bay
 Fresh banquets for the beasts of prey. 145

25.

We smote with swords ; my parting breath
 Rejoices in the pang of death.
 Where dwells fair Balder's father dread,
 The board is deck'd, the seats are spread !

In *Fjolner's court with costly cheer 150
 Soon shall I quaff the foaming beer,
 From hollow skulls of warriors slain !
 Heroes ne'er in death complain ;
 To †Vider's hall I will not bear
 The dastard words of weak despair. 155

26.

We smote with swords ; their falchions bright
 (If well they kenn'd their father's plight,
 How ‡venom-fill'd a viperous brood
 Have gnaw'd his flesh and lapp'd his blood)
 Thy sons would grasp, Aslauga§ dear, 160
 And vengeful wake the battle here.
 A mother to my bairns I gave
 Of sterling worth, to make them brave.

* *Balder's father, Fjolner, and Vider ; various names for Odin.*

† Vider was Odin's war name. *Vidr at vigom, I am called Vider in battle.—Grimnismal, st. 48.*

‡ *Venom-fill'd, Eitor-fillir.*

§ Regner's wife by a second marriage. She was the illegitimate

We smote with swords ; cold death is near,
 My *rights are passing to my heir.
 Grim† stings the adder's forked dart ;
 The vipers nestle in my heart.
 But soon, I wot, shall Vider's ‡wand
 Fix'd in Ella's §bosom stand.
 My youthful sons with rage will swell, 170
 Listening how their father fell :

daughter of Sigurd and Brynhilda, whose history I have related at length ; and was born after their first interview. From this it appears that the song of Hroke the black could not all have been written by himself in the 6th century ; on account of the mention of Sigurd, whose daughter was living at the end of the 8th.

* Literally, " It is quickly passing away to inheritance."

† *Grim*, Icel. *Grimr*.

‡ Odin's wand, i. e. a war-spear.

§ " At the east end of the town, (*Rippon, in Yorkshire,*) and not far from the Minster, is a remarkable *tumulus*, called Aili's Hill or Alla's Hill ; its shape is conical, the circumference at the base being 900 feet, and the height of the slope about 222 feet. Tradition ascribes the raising of it to the Danes. From its base to the apex, it is said to be composed wholly of sand, gravel, and human bones. Thoresby asserts, that it takes its name from Alla, a Northumbrian king, slain in the year 867." *Works of E. Domesday*, p. 121.

Those gallant boys in peace unbroken
Will never rest, till I be wroken.

28.

We smote with swords ! where javelins fly,
Where lances meet, and warriors die, 175
Fifty times and one I stood
Foremost on the field of blood.
Full young I 'gan distain my sword,
Nor fear'd I force of adverse lord ;
Nor deem'd I then, that any arm 180
By might or guile could work me harm.
Me to their feast the Gods must call ;
The brave man wails not o'er his fall.

29.

Cease, my strain ! I hear a voice
From realms, where martial souls rejoice. 185
I hear the Maids* of slaughter call,
Who bid me hence to Odin's hall.

* See Part 1st, p. 89 and 119.

High-seated* in their blest abodes

I soon shall quaff the drink of Gods.

The hours of life have glided by ; 190

I fall ; but smiling shall I die.

* *I aundveige* ; in the high seat, or at the high table.

THE
SONG
OF
HARALD THE HARDY.

*From the old Icelandic, printed in Bartholinus, (Antiquitates Danicæ)
from Knytlinga Saga.*

1805.

MY bark around Sicilia sail'd ;
Then were we gallant, proud, and strong :
The winged ship by youths impell'd
Skimm'd (as we hoped) the waves along.
My prowess, tried in martial field,
Like fruit to maiden fair shall yield !

With golden ring in Russia's land
To me the virgin plights her hand.
Fierce was the fight on Trondhiem's heath ;
I saw her sons to battle move ;

5

10

Though few, upon that field of death
 Long, long, our desperate warriors strove:
 Young from my king in battle slain
 I parted on that bloody plain.

With golden ring in Russia's land 15

To me the virgin plights her hand:
 With vigorous arms the pump we plied,
 Sixteen (no more) my dauntless crew,
 And high and furious wax'd the tide ;
 O'er the deep bark its billows flew. 20
 My prowess, tried in hour of need,
 Alike with maiden fair shall speed.

With golden ring in Russia's land

To me the virgin plights her hand.
 Eight feats I kèn ; the sportive game, 25
 The war array, the fabrile art ;
 With fearless breast the waves I stem ;
 I press the steed ; I cast the dart ;
 O'er ice on slippery skates I glide ;
 My dexterous oar defies the tide.

With golden ring in Russia's land
 To me the virgin plights her hand.
 Let blooming maid and widow say,
 Mid proud Byzantium's southern walls
 What deeds we wrought at dawn of day ! 35
 What falchions sounded through their halls !
 What blood distain'd each weighty spear !
 Those feats are famous far and near !

With golden ring in Russia's land
 To me the virgin plights her hand. 40
 Where snow-clad Uplands rear their head,
 My breath I drew mid bowmen strong ;
 But now my bark, the peasant's dread,
 Kisses the sea its rocks among.
 Midst barren isles, where ocean foam'd, 45
 Far from the tread of man I roam'd.

With golden ring in Russia's land
 To me the virgin plights her hand.

NOTES

ON

THE SONG OF HARALD THE HARDY.

No relick of Icelandic poetry has been so mangled and misconstrued by its learned translators, as the song of Harald. The Latin, by Bartholinus, is partly erroneous ; it was, however, rendered into French uncorrected by Mallet, from whom the bishop of Dromore drew his prose translation. The errors were naturally multiplied in the progress ; and at last, in the poetical translation by Mason, (which he informs us was intended as “ *a specimen of the first ballad, properly so called, now extant of the Northern tongue ;*”) not only the ideas of the original, but the historical facts alluded to in the poem, are so completely perverted, that very few vestiges of the Icelandic ballad are discernible in the English.

I have not been fortunate enough to procure a sight of Knytlinga Saga, which is very scarce; the manuscript copy in the British Museum is imperfect, and the chapter, which should contain these stanzas, is wanting.

The first of the stanzas is quoted in Heimskringla. They are said to have been composed by Harald on his return from Constantinople to the court of king Jarisleif in Russia, where he married his daughter, to whom the burthen of the stanzas alludes.

Tho lætr gerdr i Gordum

Gullhrings vid mer skolla.

These lines are carelessly translated by Bartholinus, *Attamen virgo Russica me respuit*. A doubt has arisen, whether the Russian damsel had rejected or accepted his proferred love, from the ambiguity of the verb *lætr*, which has the same opposite senses as the English word *to let*, meaning sometimes *to hinder*; the Icelandic word *Tho* has various significations; Peringskiöld understands it as I do. Bartholinus's translation is very loose; *gullhrings* is quite overlooked, and *skolla*

not explained. Schöning, in his edition of *Heimskringla*, translates the lines, *Attamen se præbet puella in Gardis aureis annulis ornata in me frigidam*. It does not appear by that vague interpretation, what he understood *Skolla* to mean. I can meet with the word no where, but in this song, where *Lætr skolla vid* occurs twice; and I am persuaded that the words mean, *consents or suffers to kiss*. In the MS. Lexicon in the British museum, *Skolla hlíod* is interpreted *gannitus*; *hlíod* means *silence*. The second passage, where the expression occurs in these stanzas, is *Nu læt ek skeidr skolla vid sker*, i. e. *Now I let my ship kiss the breakers*; Bartholinus renders it *crepitare ad saxa in mari latentia*. In that passage *læt* means clearly *permit*, and it seems very improbable, that in the same song, coupled with the same words in another line, it should mean the reverse. I shall briefly relate that part of the history of Harald to which these stanzas allude.

After the death of Saint Olave, king of Norway, in

the battle of Sticklastad (situated in the interior of Norway N. E. of Trondhiem) in 1030, Harald Hardradr his brother on the mother's side, then 15 years old, remained concealed in the hut of a peasant, till the wounds were healed, which he had received in defence of his brother. The next summer he fled to the court of Jarisleif king of Garda-rike, (a part of Russia,) where he was well received, and remained some years. In 1034 he proceeded with the followers he had collected to Constantinople, about the time when the empress Zoe raised Michael* the Paphlagonian to the throne and bed of her murdered husband. He was received into her pay, and served in company with Georgius Maniaces, whom the Icelanders call Gyrgir: but Harald soon became the favorite of the army, and he retained the sole command, Georgius having returned

* Snorro calls him Michael Catalactus, which seems to be a confusion between his name Paphlago, and that of his successor Michael Calaphutes. Their reigns having been very short, and both emperors associated with Zoe, the confusion was natural.

with the few, who adhered to him. Harald passed over into Africa, where he made considerable conquests; and, subsisting his army by plunder, he continued to remit the surplus of his booty by trusty messengers to the court of Jarisleif. His victories in Africa were followed by an attack upon Sicily, in which he was equally successful. Having spent several years on this expedition, during which he fought 18 pitched battles, and reduced many fortified places, he returned to Constantinople; whence, after securing his stipend from the imperial treasury, he undertook a journey to the Holy Land, where he made magnificent offerings, and bathed in the waters of the Jordan. On his return from that pilgrimage, hearing that his nephew Magnus had obtained the crown of Norway, he solicited his discharge from the imperial service. The profligate empress, who in her sixtieth year espoused a third husband, and associated his concubine to the throne, is supposed to have entertained a lawless passion for Harald; and, though his crime was perhaps only the

desire of quitting Constantinople, he was accused of speculation and imprisoned. On the ensuing night his escape was effected by the assistance of a lady of the first rank, who is said to have had no other motive for his deliverance, than obedience to a vision of Saint Olave. He immediately rejoined his followers, and stormed the imperial palace. According to Snorro he put out the eyes of the emperor Constantine Monomachus on this occasion ; but that is a mistake, for Constantine continued to reign after the death of Zoe. Gibbon says that in the tumult, which paved the way for Constantine to the throne, the eyes of the son of Calaphates were extinguished, and Snorro may have easily confounded the names of his son and his successor. Harald left Constantinople in 1044, according to Schöning's table, and Constantine was raised to the imperial throne in 1042, according to Gibbon ; those dates will not correspond, if it is supposed that Harald's contest was with Calaphates ; on the other hand the fact seems false, as applied to Constantine. Harald carried

off from the palace Maria the niece of Zoe, who had formerly refused to give her to him in marriage; and, having joined his ships, he fled with precipitation towards the Black Sea. Before he proceeded on his voyage, he dismissed the unhappy princess, ordering her to return to Zoe, and tell her how fruitless had been her attempts against him, and the vain refusal of her niece's hand. He then continued his voyage through the Hellespont, and composed sixteen stanzas, of which only the foregoing six are extant, alluding to Ellisif or Elisabeth, daughter of Jarisleif. He proceeded to Holmgard, where he was joyfully received by Jarisleif, and espoused Elisabeth. In 1046, a treaty was concluded between him and Magnus, who dreaded an attack from Harald, by which the latter received an equal share in the crown of Norway, and delivered up to Magnus half the immense wealth, which he had brought from Constantinople. After the death of his nephew, Harald remained sole monarch.

Constantine Manasses says that a popular tumult

took place against Michael Calaphates, in consequence of his confining Zoe; and that he tried to appease it by setting her at liberty; but he adds,

Πλὴν ἀλλὰ πάλιν ἡ πύρρᾳ
τῆς γάσεως ἀνῆπτο,
Πάλιν ἀνερριπίζετο
κατὰ τῷ καταπτύσει;

and afterwards,

Καὶ κόρας ἐξορύττουσιν
αὐτῷ ταῖς μαχαίρῃσι,
Καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ τὸν δυσσεβῆ
πατρὸς ἀδελφὸν τυφλοῖσι.

According to Michael Glycas, after the tumult, εἰς τὰ ἄδυστα τῷ ναυῷ καταδευύγουσιν, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖθεν ἀρπάζονται, καὶ διὰ τῶν ποδῶν ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ σύρονται, κατὰ δέ γε τὸ Σίγμα τὰς ὀρθαλμὰς ἐκτυφλῶνται, ὡς ἡ Θεοδώρα ἐνέσκηψεν. Both these accounts differ from that of Gibbon.

V. 2.—“*Gallant*, &c.” Prudir, a more expressive word than *proud*, meaning adorned with every excellence.

V. 3.—“*Winged ship.*” Vængis hiortr ; literally
a winged hart.

V. 4 and 5.—“ My prowess, &c.”—

“ Vætti ec minnr at motti

Mani enn thinnig nenna.”

These lines appear to me to have been quite misunderstood ; I translate them thus. *Spero memor in conventu Virgini porrò ad eum modum operam præbere.*

Nenna is an amatory verb. In *Scirnis for*, where an assignation is made between Gerda and Freyr, the word occurs ; Nenna Niardar syni, *operam dare* Niordi nato. *Vætti ec*, I expect. “ Sá er vid vættom af vegi löngom, Quem expectavimus de longâ viâ.

Hym. Qv. 11.—At nenna, spontaneam alacritatem habere ad aliquam rem peragendam. *Scirn. f. 38. 6.—*

Mani, dative from *man*, a maid ; Manna glaum maní, hominum gaudia virgini. *Ib. 34. Mot*, conventus.

Minnr, or *minnugr*, mindful. Schöning translates it *minus* ; but the comparative, *less*, would be *minne* masc. or fem. *minna* neut. nor could it take an *r*, if used adverbially.

V. 13. "*My king.*" His brother Saint Olave, killed in the battle of Sticklastad against Thorer Hund, whose army consisted chiefly of the inhabitants of Trondhiem. "Hafa Threndor hier mann mug mestann. *Olaf. Helges S. c. 231.* Harald was wounded in supporting his brother, and fled the country. The English translators from ignorance of the history, as well as the language, have made Harald victorious, and state that he slew a king.

V. 17. "*The pump we plied.*" Josum ver svanna. —Ec eis, *haurio* ; præterit. sing. joos.—I take svanna to be a pump, upon the authority of Bartholinus.

V. 20. "*Billows.*" In Bartholinus it is printed *Hum*, which would be *the twilight* ; it should be *humr*, the sea.

V. 25 and 26. "*Eight feats, &c.*"—

Ithrottir kann ek atta

Ygs fet ek lid at smida

Færr ek er hvast a hesti.

Bartholinus translates the second line carelessly, *Strenuè dimicare audeo*, leaving some of the words

uninterpreted; and thus in the detail he and the other translators, who have followed him, make out only six exercises; instead of eight, as stated in the first line. *Ek fet*, is I place firmly or fortify. M. S. Lex. *Lid*, an army. *At smida*, to forge; whence our word *smith*. *Færr*, strong; fortis, *Hickesius*. *Ek er hvast a hesti*, I am keen on horseback. There should therefore be commas after *lid* and *færr*. I am unacquainted with the word *ygs*; but *ygge* is pinna, MS. Lex. and I imagine that the word here stands by itself, meaning *at ninepins*, or some game of that sort; which, with the addition of the forge, would make up the eight exercises. In a passage quoted by Bartholinus, p. 420. Regnvaldus Kolson boasts of nine exercises, which are chess, runes or charms, reading, *forging*, skating, shooting, rowing, playing on the harp, and composing verses.

V. 33. "*Maid and widow.*" Perhaps alluding to Zoe and her niece Maria.

V. 34. "*Byzantium's southern walls.*" Literally,

the city in the South. I have ventured to add the name Byzantium.

V. 41. "*Uplands*." Part of Sweden and Norway so called, as we say The Highlands, in Scotland.

As my version differs very widely from that of Mason, I think it right to subjoin a literal prose translation together with the original lines, that the reader may judge how far it is faithful.

Sneid fyrir Sikiley vida	The ship sailed wide round Sicily.
Sud; varum tha prudir.	Then we were magnificent. The
Brunn skrcid vel til vanar	brown winged stag (i. e. ship) glid-
Vengis hiortr und drengjum.	ed well according to our hopes un-
Vætti ek minnr at motti	der the youths. Mindful I hope in
Mani enn thinnig nenna.	the meeting to be equally active in
Tho *lætr gerdr i Gorgum	love to the virgin. Hence the maid
Gullhrings vid mer skolla.	of the gold ring in Russia consents
	to embrace me.
Fund var thess, at Thrændir	Such was the conflict, that the men

* *Lætr* is either *permits*, or *hinders*. Coupled with a passive participle or an infinitive it is an auxiliary, and adds nothing to the sense but its tense; as *lætr sodinn*, for *sydr*, he boils. If *lætr* is taken in the negative sense, the translation will be, *But the maid of the gold ring in Russia refuses to embrace me.*

Their hofdu líd meirra ;
 Vard su er ver ofgiordum
 Vist errilig snerra :
 Skildumz ungr við ungan
 Allvalld í styr fallinn.

Tho, &c.

Senn josum ver svanna
 Sextan, þá er brim vexti,
 (Dreif a hláðna hufa
 Humr) í forum rumum.
 Vætti ek minnr at motti
 Mani enn thinnig nenna.

Tho, &c.

Ithrottir kann ek atta.
 Ygs, fet ek líd, at smíða
 Færr, er ek hvast a hesti ;
 Hefik sund numit stundum ;
 Skríða kann ek a skíðum ;
 Skyt ek oc ræk sva at nytir ;

Tho, &c.

of Trondhiem, they had the largest
 host. That fight, which we execut-
 ed, was certainly terrible. Young
 I was separated from the young
 king fallen in stout, &c.

Together sixteen we worked the
 pump, when the tide waxed, (the
 sea rushed into the laden planks)
 on four benches. Mindful I hope
 in the meeting to be equally active
 in love to the virgin, &c.

I ken eight exercises. Nine-
 pins; (*Quære.*)—I can array an
 army; strong in working at the
 forge; I am keen on horseback; I
 have sometimes taken the sound;
 (*as we say, to take the water;*) I can
 slide on skates; I shoot and row, so
 as to be useful, &c.

Enn munat eckia....

Ung ne mæz at værin,

Thar ergiordum tsvip sverdum,

Sudr i borg um morgin.

Ruddumz um mæd oddi ;

Eru merki thar verka.

Tho, &c.

Fæddr var ek, thar alma

Uplendingar bendu ;

Nu læt ek vid sker skolla

Skeidr humonnum leidar.

Vitt hefi ek sizt ytum

Eygard skotid bardi.

Tho, &c.

But nor widow nor young maid may

(deny*) that we were (where we

made the clash of swords) south-

ward in the city at morning. We

were reddened round with weapons.

Those works are notorious. &c.

I was born, where the Uplanders

bend the bow ; now I let my war-

ship, hated by the countrymen,

kiss the breakers. Wide at a dis-

tance from men have I frequented

the abode of islands (i. e. the sea)

with my ship. &c.

* Bartholinus inserts *negabit* in his translation ; a word is wanting not only to the sense, but to the metre, of the first line in this stanza.

† "Hvoriar eru bestar, ef berias skall,

Heiller at sverda svipan?"

Quænam sunt optima, si pugnandum est, Consilia cum *gladiatorum collisione*."—Quoted from the unpublished Edda in *Norna Gests Saga*.

From the old Icelandic, printed in Bartholinus *Ant. Dan.* p. 391. and
in Börner's *Nordiska Kämpa Dater.*

THAT chief I follow'd, whom I kenn'd
 Mightiest in battle's strife ;
 Those were the happiest fairest days
 Of all my varied life :

Before, (as angry fate decreed) . . . 5
Where evil spirits led,
For the last time in joyful trim
To Hordaland I sped.

There, by each hateful curse pursued,
 To work a deed of shame; 10
 And (such, alas ! my bitter lot)
 To gain a traitor's name.

Vikar my king (stout Geirthiof's bane
 And famed in deadly stour)
 Aloft, sad victim to the Gods, 15
 I hung in evil hour.

My weapon to the chieftain's heart
 Thrust deep the deadly blow ;
 Of all the works, my hand hath wrought,
 This caused me keenest woe. 20

Thence hapless have I wander'd on
 A wild ill-fated road ;
 Abhorr'd of every Hordian boor,
 And bent by sorrow's load :

Without or wealth to soothe my cares, 25
 Or joy of honest fame ;
 No king to guide my pathless way,
 No thought, but woe and shame.

NOTES

ON

THE LAMENTATION OF STARKADER.

THESE ancient lines are said to have been composed by Starkader himself. He was a warrior of great reputation, and by his assistance the dominion of Vikar was established over a great part of Norway. The following extraordinary account of the death of Vikar, which took place in 390, is given in the *Saga af Gautreki oc Hrolfi*, printed at Upsala in 1664, with a Swedish translation by Verelius.

“Starkader accompanied king Vikar to Hordaland; he was the most distinguished warrior in the army, and dearest to the king. The wind proving boisterous and unfavourable, after the oracles had been consulted, it was deemed, that Odin required a man, drawn by lot

from the army, to be hanged as a sacrifice ; the lot fell upon Vikar, which produced great sorrow amongst his followers. A little before midnight Starkader was awakened by his foster-father Hrosharsgrani, who bade him rise and follow him. They took a small boat, and rowed to an island ; there went they up into the woods, and found a spot, from which the trees had been cleared. Eleven men sat there upon stools, and a twelfth seat was unoccupied. They advanced into the assembly, and Hrosharsgrani seated himself in the vacant place. They all saluted Odin, who said, that the judges should decide the fate of Starkader. Thor began, and said. " Alfr, father to Starkader's mother, gave his daughter to a houndlike Jotun, rather than to Thor the God. And on this account I decree, that Starkader shall have neither son nor daughter, and shall so end his life." Odin said. " I decree, that he shall live three ages of men." Thor said. " He shall perform a foulaction in each." Odin said. " I decree, that he shall have the best of weapons and armour."

Thor said. "I decree, that he shall possess neither land nor territory." Odin said. "I decree, that he shall be rich in chattels." Thor said. "I ordain, that he shall never think his wealth sufficient." Odin said. "I give him victory and skill in every combat." Thor said. "I condemn him to be wounded in every encounter." Odin said. "I give him ready skill in poetry, so that he may versify as fast as speak." Thor said. "He shall never remember, what he hath composed." Odin said. "I decree, that he shall be highly esteemed by the most illustrious and the best of mankind." Thor said. "He shall be hated by the people." The judges then confirmed all that had been said concerning Starkader, and the assembly was thus dissolved. Hrosharsgrani and Starkader returned to their boat; then said Hrosharsgrani; "Now, foster-son, thou shouldst repay the assistance, which I have afforded thee." "Well," replied Starkader. "Then shalt thou incontinently send me king Vikar," (said Hrosharsgrani) "and I will lay the scheme for this."

Starkader assented. Hrosharsgrani took a weapon in his hand, and said, that it should appear like a reed. Then returned they to the army, and it was already daybreak. The next morning the king's council assembled to deliberate; they were all of opinion, that some show of sacrifice should be made, and Starkader published their decision. A fir tree stood near them, and a stem was lying by it; from the lower part of the fir grew a slender twig, which reached up to the limbs of the tree. The servants were then preparing meat, and a calf was cut up and opened. Starkader took the calf's intestine; and, mounting the stem, he bent down the slender twig, and tied the calf's intestine to it. Then said Starkader to the king; "Now is there a gibbet prepared for thee, king; and it does not seem very dangerous. Now come thou here, that I may lay the snare round thy throat." The king said, "If this does not prove more dangerous, than it seems to me, I expect, that it will not hurt me; but, if it be otherwise, fortune must decide what shall happen." Then

he mounted, and Starkader layed the noose round his throat, and descended from the stem. Starkader then thrust the reed against the king, and said; "Now I give thee to Odin." He then loosed the twig of the fir; the reed was changed into a spear, and pierced the king; the stem slipped from under his foot, and the calf's intestine was turned into a strong halter, and the twig sprung up, and raised the king to the branches; and there he died."

V. 6. *Enn thvi flaugd ollu*; the evil spirits were the cause of my going there.—*Flaugd* is the plural of *flagd*, a monster, or evil genius. There is a similar expression in the dying song of Ingimar of Ask in *Orkneyinga Saga*, p. 172.

“*Flaugd hauttu mic til Fyrileifar*;

Æ var ec úfuss til orosto;

Mic bittu örfar af álmboga;

Mun ec aldrigi á Ask koma.”

i. e. “The evil spirits excited me to go to Fyrileif; I was always disinclined to war; the arrows from the bow sting me; I must never return to Ask.”

V. 8. *Hordaland* was the old name for a part of Norway in the neighbourhood of Hardanger.

V. 12. *Nidings nafn*; an infamous name.—*Nidings verk* is an infamous deed; *Nidingr*, a man branded with infamy for such a deed. See Bartholinus, (1. 7.) who has expatiated on this subject, and stated the different actions, which were reckoned infamous.

V. 13. *Geirthiofs bana*; the slayer of Geirthiof.—*Herthiof* murdered *Halfdan* the father of *Vikar*, and was afterwards defeated and slain by *Vikar* with the assistance of *Starkader*. The same person is probably here intended by *Geirthiof*.

GRYMUR AND HIALMAR.

From the old Icelandic in the Rhyme of Karl and Grymur.

1805.

In the preceding part of this rhyme, Grymur, son of a valiant earl, asks for the hand of Ingegerda, daughter of Karl, king of Sweden; and she is promised to him, on condition that he shall first overthrow Hialmar, son of Harek, king of Biarmaland. Grymur sails in quest of Hialmar, whom he finds proceeding towards Sweden, with the intention of wooing the same Ingegerda.

GRYMUR stands on Gothic land;

Wolves shall lick the bloody strand,

If the sturdy warriors fight

Proudly for the virgin bright.

On the shore each eye was bent; 5

The land was deck'd with many a tent;

Bright the host with princely show;

Hialmar ruled that host, I trow.

Loud he cried, "Ye strangers free,

Whose yon fleet, that stems the sea?" 10

Forth stepp'd, and named him, Grymur strong ;

" Thee have I sought this summer long."—

" Now welcome, Grymur ! good thy fare,

Health and honor be thy share !

Gold, and wine of fairest hue, 15

Will I give thee, not untrue."—

" I take not, I, thy bidding fair ;

This heart is bent on savage war.

Gird thee, gird thee, for the fight !

We must feed the wolves to night !"— 20

" Rather be our thoughts of peace ;"

(Hjalmar spoke with courteous phrase)

" Let us dwell, like brothers sworn,

Join'd in sweet friendship night and morn !

Wake we not the strife of shields ! 25

Well this arm the falchion wields,

But the lovely virgin's hand

Now I woo from Swedish land."

Fierce and furious wax'd the knight ;

Loud he cried with wounded spite, 30.

"Bowne* thee quick to smite my shield ;

Shrink not from the martial field!"—

"Costly rings I give to thee

With my sister fair to see,

Biarmaland and princely sway, 35

So we feed not birds of prey."—

"I thy sister will not see ;

Bid not thou such gifts to me!

Cowards linger, slow from fear ;

This the noble maid will hear." 40

Hjalmar cries with passion sore,

"Youth, I scorn to soothe thee more!

Stand the fight ; on bucklers sheen

Prove we strait our weapons keen!"

He has ta'en his hauberk white, 45

Trusty blade, and helmet bright ;

And his buckler gleams afar ;

Stouter ne'er was held in war.

* Bowne, make ready.

First by lot must Grymur smite ;
 Arm'd he was to stir the fight. 50
 He clove the buckler with his brand,
 And struck to ground Hialmar's hand.
 But never flinch'd that warrior true,
 Nor deign'd, tho' maim'd, for peace to sue.
 His glaive, uprais'd with dauntless main, 55
 Split Grymur's helm and mail in twain.
 Streaming flow'd apace the gore ;
 The sharp-edged sword had smote him sore :
 His breast and entrails felt the wound,
 And the blade shiver'd on the ground. 60
 Hialmar cried, " The stroke is light ;
 My trusty falchion fail'd to bite.
 Had both mine arms discharged the blow,
 Warrior, thou hadst now been low."
 Grymur fierce, with either hand, 63
 Reckless upheav'd his deadly brand ;
 He smote the helm ; his weapon's point
 Cleft head and brain with dreadful dint.

Clang'd in the steel the ringing sword;
 The host beheld their prostrate lord. 70
 Nor long the fainting Grymur stood,
 For gushing well'd the stream of blood.
 Hialmar good lies buried there ;
 Grymur home his soldiers bare.
 As he near'd the Swedish ground, 75
 Swell'd apace his burning wound ;
 Strength and life began to fail :
 The king, the maiden, heard the tale.
 Whence, but from her, the leech's aid ?
 And who, but Grymur, claim'd the maid ? 80
 Wassail* was kept in the monarch's hall,
 And proudly dight were the courtiers all.
 Each heart was brisk, as the wine did flow ;
 No goblet of water was pour'd, I trow.
 The nuptial feast was blithe and gay ; 85
 The gifts of the king were large that day :

* *Weitzla*, Icelandic ; a banquet, or carousal.

Bracelet, or necklace, or ring of gold,
Must every trusty liegeman hold.
The virgin bless'd the youth of her choice,
And bridegroom and bride did both rejoice. 90

NOTES

ON

GRYMUR AND HIALMAR.

THESE lines are translated from a part of the *Rimur af Karl og Grym Suia kongum, og af Hialmar Hareks suni a Biarmalande*, which was published by Bïörner with a very loose translation. Indeed it is rather a summary of the contents, than a translation; for he has moulded many Icelandic sentences into one Latin period, and given the whole a different cast. I have rendered it line for line, and nearly in the metre of the original, which has however a triple alliteration to each couplet, as well as rhyme. It may be sufficient to quote the four first lines of the Icelandic.

Grymur kiemur a Gautalad,
Giefast mun vargi nockr brad,
Ef thar stryda sterker nu
Stoltar menn fyrer biarta fru.

The Biarmians did not speak the Northern language, and were probably Finns or Laplanders. In king Alfred's Periplus it is stated, that their language was like that of birds.

V. 49. "*First by lot, &c.*"—It was an old custom amongst the Northern nations to fight their duels with alternate blows. The striker generally wielded his sword in both hands, and discharged the blow on his antagonist, who stood firm to receive it, under the protection of his shield. The first stroke was not always however decided by lot. See the first duel between Gunlaug and Rafen in part 1st. p. 68. and that of Angrym and Svafurlami, p. 92.

V. 87. "*Bracelet, &c.*"—See the note on the word *Jewels* in part 1st. p. 30.

NOTE
ON
THE DISCOVERY OF ICELAND.

IN the former part, p. 40, I mentioned that at the commencement of the reign of Harald Harfager, Iceland was uninhabited.

Angrim Jonas, in his *Crymogæa* and *Specimen Historicum*, has pointed out the absurdity of imagining, that Iceland was the Thule of the ancients. Unless my memory deceives me, that mistaken notion originated with Adam of Bremen. It appears most probable, that Thule was a part of Norway, which still bears the name of Thyle-mark, where the traces of Phœnician commerce are visible; where great mines had been dug, and forests felled, at a period so early, that no account of it appears in the old histories; and at a time when the rude and ignorant natives could

not easily have performed works of such magnitude. It is certain, that Iceland was completely covered with *wood in the ninth century, when it was first discovered ; nor were any vestiges of culture or inhabitants to be seen throughout the island, excepting a few crosses and trifling utensils, which had been left by Irish fishermen, who occasionally touched there, and were called Papæ, on account of their religion, by the first Norwegian settlers. Hence it is evident, that Iceland could not have been that Thule, with which the Phœnicians had formerly had intercourse and trade.

Iceland was first discovered by †Naddod, a Norwegian pirate, who had established himself in the Feroe isles. These islands had been frequented by the Norwegians, who had turned out sheep upon them, for the purpose of getting fresh provisions, whenever

* With willows according to Are Froda, the old Icelandic historian, who was born in 1068, c. 2. p. 10 ; and with birch according to Angrim Jonas, who wrote in 1609. p. 21. See Landnama, part 1st. c. 1. p. 3.

† Called Naddocus by Angrim Jonas.

they had occasion to touch there, and on that account they were called Fær-øe or sheep-islands; from the old word *fær*, (in Danish *faar*) which was used for sheep. One of the first settlers in these islands was Grim Camban, a Norwegian, who *was worshipped after his death in Iceland.

About the year 861, the pirate Naddod being overtaken by a violent storm between Norway and Ferroe, was driven upon the eastern coast of Iceland into a bay, which is now called Austfiord, where he could not discover the smallest trace of habitation. A heavy fall of snow, which happened just before his departure in autumn, and covered all the high country, induced him to give the island the name of Sneeland, *i. e.* *snow-land*. Three years after the first discovery of this country, Gardar, a Suede by birth, sailing through Petland fiord, between Scotland and the Orkneys, was also driven by a storm to the eastern coast of Ice-

* See Landnama, part 1st. c. 14. p. 15.

land, and landed near the promontory called Austurhorn in Skjalfanda bay, where he passed the winter. Another small vessel was driven into a neighbouring bay just before the departure of Gardar; from which it may be conjectured, that, although we have no such accounts, this island must have been visited before under stress of weather at different times by the Norwegians, as well as Irish, ships; though little regarded, as a barren and distant land. The name of Sneeland was changed for Gardars-holm, by which the island was called in honor of its second accidental visitor.—The reports and exaggerated description of Gardar, excited Flokka, a noted pirate of Rogaland, in Norway, distinguished by birth and valor, to sail in quest of this new country. With this view he constructed a vessel; and, to assist him in directing his course, he resolved on the curious expedient of carrying with him some crows, from which circumstance he afterwards was called *Rafn-Flokka. It appears that he had

* In Danish Ravn, a crow.

formed an intention of settling in the island, as he carried his daughters with him, which he would probably not have done, if his expedition had been for the usual purpose of piracy. One of them called Geirhilda, according to Angrim Jonas, was accidentally drowned at Shetland, in a lake, which afterwards bore her name; and the other was married to a man of distinction in Ferroe, where Flokka touched in the course of his voyage. Having sailed hence into the wide sea, he loosed one of his birds, which rising to a considerable height, directed its flight to the land which they had quitted; from which he concluded, that he still was nearer to that, than to any other coast. Some time after a second crow was loosed, which having risen to an excessive height, without being able (as it was supposed) to discover land, returned on board the vessel. Flokka steered a steady course according to the best conjecture, till the third crow, having towered like the former, took a direct flight, which served him as a guidance to the eastern shores of

Iceland. He navigated completely round the island, and from the accumulation of ice, which floated into the Northern bays in the spring, he gave the country the name of Iceland, which it has ever since retained. The severity of the winter had destroyed all his tame animals, and on this account, at the close of summer, he sailed for Norway ; but a violent squall separated his boat from the ship, and drove them back to Iceland, where he was forced to pass a second winter, living chiefly upon fish, with which the bays abounded. He was accompanied in this expedition by a Scotchman called Faxe, whose name was given to a great bay on the south western coast. It appears, that the melancholy winters, he passed there, had cooled the ardor of Flokka, for on his return to Norway he gave no flattering description of the country, he had quitted ; and the island remained uninhabited till about the year 874, when the first colony was there established by Ingolf and Hiorleif, two distinguished Norwegian sea-rovers from Fiordafylke.

The names of all the early settlers in Iceland, and the spots which they occupied, were carefully recorded ; and the Icelanders of the present day can trace their pedigrees up to the ninth century with tolerable certainty.

THE END.

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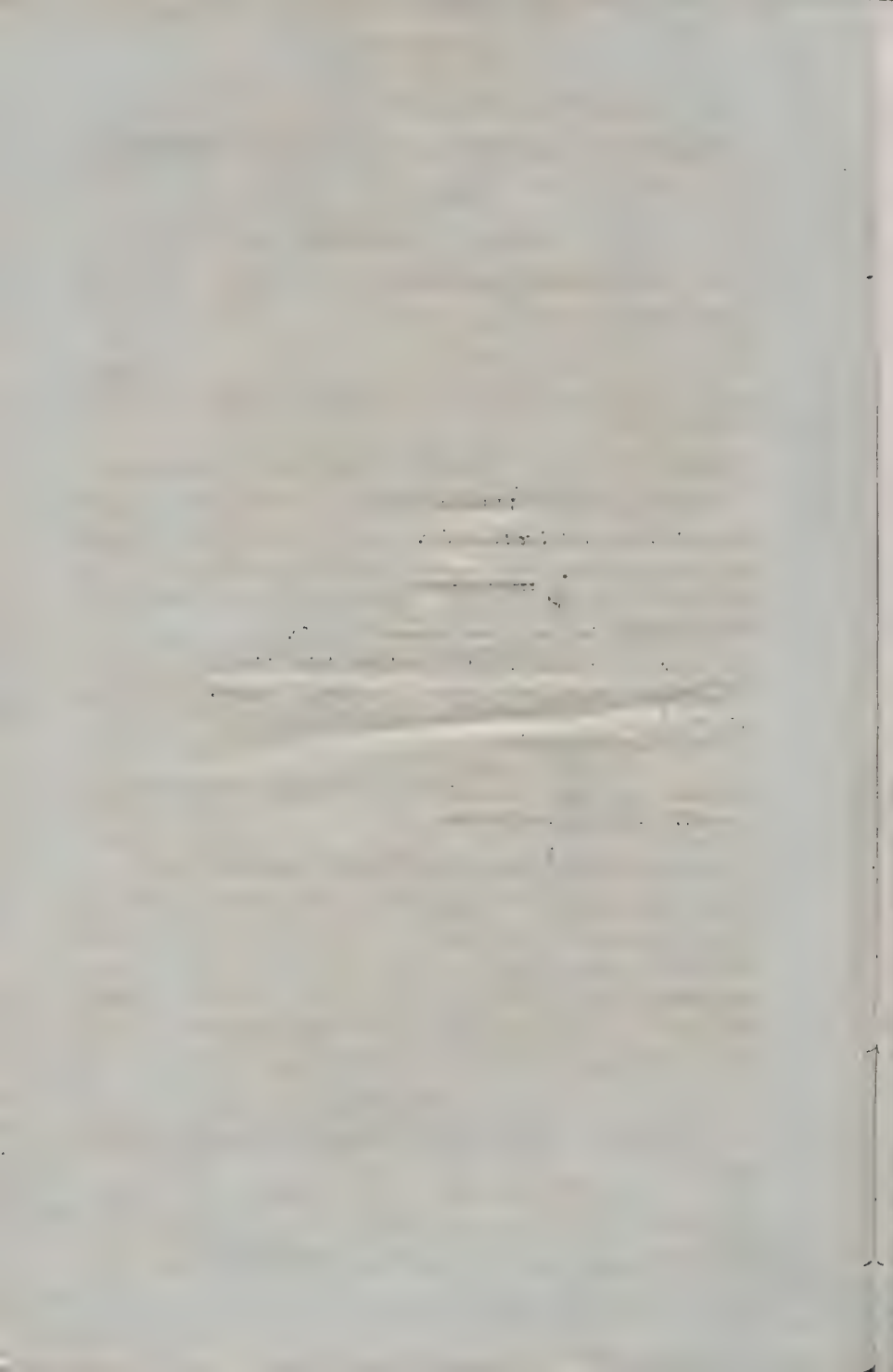
ERRATA,

P. 61. l. 17, *after* mot, insert a meeting.

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